

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 4-18 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 17 are the independent claims. By this Amendment, claim 3 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 2 and 17 are amended and claim 18 is added. As claim the amended claims and new claim 18 recite subject matter found to be allowable, no new matter is added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-4, 9-11, 14 and 16. Independent claim 1 is rewritten to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2 and claim 2 is rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of allowable claim 3. Independent claim 7 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 2 and new independent claim 18 recites the subject matter of allowable claim 3. Accordingly, all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 5-8, 12, 13, 15 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated over U.S. Patent No. 6,250,231 to Karasek in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,487,555 to Koch et al. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, independent claims 1 and 17 are amended to recite the subject matter of allowable claim 2. Thus, the combination of references fails to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in the rejected claims. As such, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

New Claims

None of the applied references, when considered alone or in combination, disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in new independent claim 18 which includes the subject matter of allowable claim 3.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, the Applicants respectfully submit that each of the pending objections and rejections has been addressed and overcome, placing the present application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

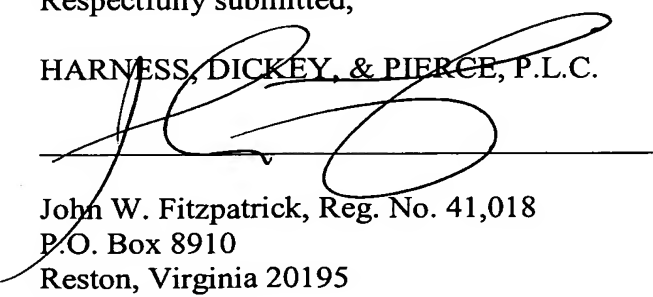
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Fitzpatrick, 41,018, at the telephone number of the below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By


John W. Fitzpatrick, Reg. No. 41,018
P.O. Box 8910
Reston, Virginia 20195
(703) 668-8000

DJD/JWF/kas